

**JEFFERSON  
ECONOMIC  
RECOVERY  
P L A N**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements .....	2
Introduction .....	5
Purpose of the Document.....	5
Planning Process.....	6
Plan Foundations.....	6
Topics at the Forefront/Needs to be Addressed in this Effort .....	6
Project Objectives.....	8
Project goals.....	8
Key Focus Areas .....	8
Regional Position.....	10
Regional Assets.....	10
Jefferson’s Key Assets & Opportunities .....	12
Economic Development Recovery Framework .....	14
Opportunity Areas and Initiatives .....	14
Development Opportunities and Initiatives .....	18
Jefferson Development Opportunities.....	18
Downtown Vision.....	20
Development Sites.....	22
Southern Site: Tyson .....	22
Northern Site: Former County Highway department .....	23
Central Site: Foremost Buildings.....	24
Parks and Trails.....	25
Jefferson Strategic Economic Recovery Framework.....	26
Projects to Advance in Near Term .....	29

## MAPS AND FIGURES

Regional Opportunities Map .....	9
Opportunity Analysis Map .....	13
Development Opportunities Map .....	19
Downtown Vision Map .....	21
Development Opportunities: Southern Site .....	22
Development Opportunities: Northern Site .....	23
Development Opportunities: Central Site .....	24
Parks and Trails Map .....	25
Jefferson Strategic Economic Recovery Framework.....	27

## SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTS

*Available Upon Request*

Market Analysis

Floodplain Analysis

Medical College/Research Park Concept Plan and Economic Impact Projections

Large Scale Maps

## INTRODUCTION

The City of Jefferson, Wisconsin is centrally located in the County of Jefferson, less than 45 minutes from downtown Madison to the west, and less than one hour from Milwaukee to the east. Interstate I-94 runs east-west through the County just north of the City of Jefferson, and has contributed to the region's diversified economy. Located between the major metro areas of both Milwaukee and Madison, Jefferson boasts strong rural roots and small-town community character and amenities.

This Economic Recovery Plan effort, funded by the EDA, began in response to the closure of Tyson Foods' Jefferson Plant on July 9, 2016. The production facility along the Rock River has employed residents in the food processing industry since its founding in 1875; 126 years prior to being acquired by Tyson Foods in 2001. In 2016 this plant closed its doors, eliminating the 250 jobs that remained following an earlier wave of layoffs. In total, the closure created a loss of nearly 400 jobs with layoffs impacting salaried and hourly positions alike. In a city of 7,984 residents, this loss has had a tremendous ripple effect throughout the local economy, impacting suppliers and farmers. Smaller processing facilities are unable to absorb the influx of job seekers, forcing many residents into unemployment. Additionally, Tyson Foods was a regional employer, so while Jefferson was hit hardest by the closure, many workers traveled to Jefferson from Janesville, Milwaukee, Watertown, and Cambridge, Wisconsin for employment.

### PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

This document summarizes the process, findings, and recommendations of the Economic Recovery Planning effort which was conducted January-July 2017. It presents a focused Economic Development Strategy that can help guide public and private decision-making toward an economically strong and sustainable future. The Economic Development Strategy is an achievable place-based goal for a future Jefferson around which residents, business leaders for large, medium and small companies, including local entrepreneurs, and other interested parties can structure their own efforts to advance Jefferson's economic future.

Throughout this Plan there are recommendations that outline key strategies and projects that the community should pursue over the next 5-10 years to begin the process of reviving and advancing Jefferson's economy. The Economic Development Framework presents the top areas of focus to pursue economic development centered on Jefferson's place in the region, key community assets to build upon including natural resources and community character, and lay the foundation to create an environment desirable to current residents and business, while also attractive to job-seekers, families, visitors and businesses looking for locations to call home.

## PLANNING PROCESS

Utilizing the EDA grant awarded to the City of Jefferson, development of this Economic Recovery Plan was completed from January to August 2017. Research and analyses were conducted to develop a broad understanding of the existing economic and physical conditions in Jefferson. In addition to analyses conducted and reported in this plan and the supplementary materials, the steering committee, stakeholder interviews, work sessions, and focus groups provided local expertise related to the priorities of leadership and economic development focused organizations, from both the public- and private-sectors. In this process, demographic, economic, and environmental data were collected to complete asset and inventory analysis of Jefferson's existing conditions; market analysis; and floodplain activity assessment and analysis. The information gathered through these efforts informed the identification and mapping of Jefferson's assets and opportunities. Discussion of these assets, opportunity areas, and maps is featured throughout the Plan and guides the recommendation of key initiatives for focused economic development effort in the future.

## PLAN FOUNDATIONS

### TOPICS AT THE FOREFRONT/NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THIS EFFORT

Challenges exacerbated by the sudden Tyson plant closure include: regional job loss in a major industry; need for workforce training and retooling; limited and outdated industrial infrastructure; lost municipal revenues; and the need for a near-term economic recovery strategy. The Economic Recovery Plan proposed in this project will address these issues and chart a sustainable path forward for Jefferson and the region.

**Regional Job Loss:** The Southern Wisconsin region and particularly Jefferson County, are heavily engaged in food manufacturing (NAICS 311). Compared to the United States, the Madison MSA generates a location quotient of 1.35 and Jefferson County boasts a hefty 5.88. To provide context, any value over 1 indicates a higher concentration of food manufacturing than the nation. Over the last year, both Tyson Foods in Jefferson and Oscar Mayer in Madison, major global food manufacturers, have announced plant closures. The loss of these manufacturers negatively impacts other local food businesses in the supply network like Americold, a cold storage business on Jefferson's southside. This economic recovery plan has been developed to uncover economic development opportunities and strategies to identify potential economic growth areas.

**Limited and Outdated Industry:** Currently, Jefferson is limited in sites ready for businesses to locate - the historic industrial sites along the river and downtown rail line are undesirable sites for modern business to relocate or expand on. This plan will develop concepts for reuse or redevelopment of parcels under City or County control, and propose sites for new development to allow opportunities for job growth in Jefferson. In order to align economic growth with on-the-

ground redevelopment along with the identification of *geographic* development opportunity areas, this effort will prioritize *economic* development opportunity areas—providing strategies to connect economic areas of opportunity with physical locations for advancement. From this work, Jefferson will be prepared to communicate their economic focus and market the potential of sites to brokers, developers, and employers.

**Need for Workforce Training and Retooling:** To combat unemployment and mitigate out-migration of workforce, this plan will identify areas of focus to work with private-sector partners to facilitate training and retooling of the workforce.

**Lost Municipal Revenues:** Tyson Foods is the largest utility account for both Jefferson Wastewater and Jefferson Utilities which provides water and sewer. The losses in utility revenue from the closure are anticipated to range from \$800,000 to \$1,000,000/annual. Through the implementation of this plan, the City can continue efforts to replace this revenue and focus on new business growth strategies and sites for potential development.

**Near-term Recovery Strategy:** Several previously completed community plans set a course for Jefferson's future growth, however, the loss of a major employer has forced the City and County to reassess priorities and opportunities. This project will build upon past efforts and develop an action-oriented plan that will address current conditions and recommend a strategy for moving the community forward.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Position Jefferson for economic recovery and growth by identifying asset-based opportunity areas and aligning initiatives to sites with the greatest potential for redevelopment and economic growth.

## PROJECT GOALS

The project goals of this planning effort:

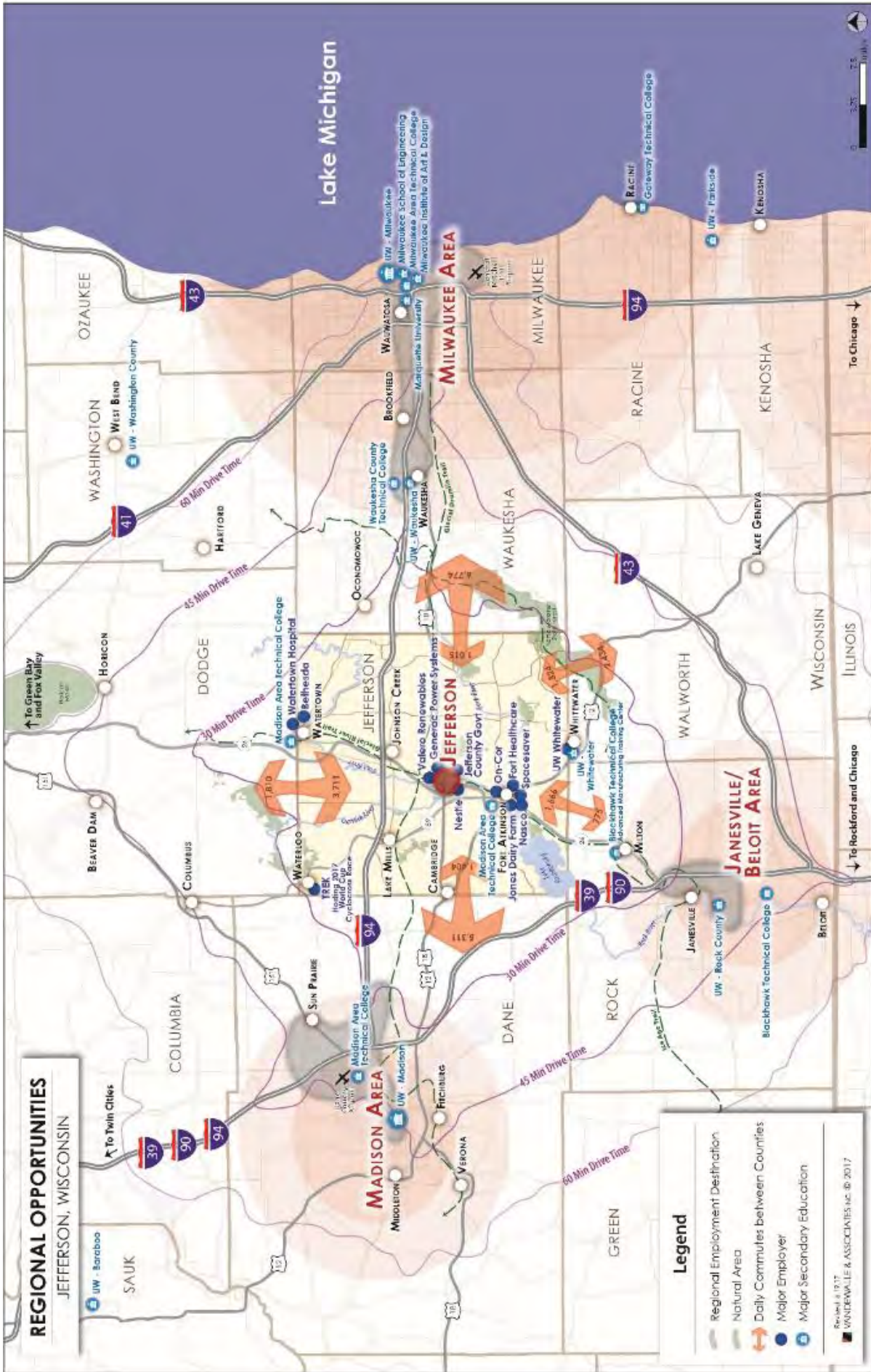
- Develop an understanding of the community's assets and opportunities related to key focus areas;
- Forge a path for economic development and redevelopment project priorities and focus;
- Guide the City and strategic partners to move forward with key initiatives, projects, and identified sites.

## KEY FOCUS AREAS

To advance economic development in Jefferson – three Key Focus Areas have been identified as the focal point for efforts in community growth. One could ask when working on a particular economic development or development effort: “Am I working toward advancing one or more of the following Key Focus Areas?” Through targeted efforts around these Key Focus Areas, greater success will be achieved over the long-term and be authentic to the community of Jefferson.

1. Capitalize on small-town community strengths and magnetism
2. Promote home-grown business growth as well as location as a destination for businesses to locate and grow
3. Nurture and grow assets in nature-based recreation, food production, and arts





REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES MAP

## REGIONAL POSITION

Jefferson’s physical and economic position in the region provides the City with unique opportunities for growth. To move forward, building upon locational assets, Jefferson should capitalize on what makes Jefferson unique and desirable to attract and grow major employers, improve the quality of life for residents, and position itself as a destination for visitors looking for an authentic small-town community with access to unparalleled natural amenities.

## REGIONAL ASSETS

### 1. Regional Connections

**Commuter-shed** – Its convenient location among major interstate thoroughfares and proximity to regional employment hubs, as well as the presence of many local employers makes Jefferson an ideal location for workers who commute to or from surrounding communities.

**Metro Connections** – Jefferson is centrally located within the county and residents can easily access major urban centers including Madison, Milwaukee, Janesville and Chicago, Illinois.

### 2. Strong Economic Identity

**Food Economy** – Rich in farmland and natural amenities, Jefferson County ranks among Wisconsin’s top counties for food production. Over 240,000 acres of land are farmed by local farmers and food processing companies churn out value-added products.

**Major Employers** – A number of major employers from a variety of industries provide economic opportunities to residents across the county—their role in the local and regional economies should be capitalized on with efforts to expand their business and their supply-chain presences. Major employers include:

- Trek
- Valero Renewables
- Generac Power Systems
- Nestle
- Spacesaver
- Nasco

**Established Support Network** – Jefferson’s specialization in food production and advanced manufacturing has fostered the development of a diverse network of supply industries that support many major employers. These companies include logistics and storage; food packaging; local family farms; and value-added producers like wineries, cheese producers, and breweries.

### 3. Regional Education and Workforce Networks

**Access to Major Universities** – Jefferson is situated between major 4-year higher education and research institutions, including University of Wisconsin institutions in Madison, Milwaukee, and Whitewater; Marquette University; and the Milwaukee School of Engineering.

**Network of Workforce Development** – Jefferson also benefits from close- proximity to the region’s major technical and community college institutions focused on workforce development including Madison College, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Blackhawk Technical College, and the Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin. These institutions are uniquely positioned to support and help connect local industries with a workforce trained in the skills they demand.

### 4. Natural and Cultural Assets

**Green Zone** – Rich farmland and abundant natural resources, like the Rock and Crawfish Rivers, numerous lakes and wetlands, have been actively preserved for decades, establishing Jefferson as a green corridor that provides a valuable reprieve from the surrounding urban centers for residents and visitors alike.

**Convergence of Major Trails** – Jefferson is a connection point for some of the region’s major recreation and bicycle trails, including the Glacial River Trail and Glacial Drumlin Trail.

## JEFFERSON'S KEY ASSETS & OPPORTUNITIES

Key city-wide assets were identified for the city-wide Opportunity Analysis which considers existing economic assets, natural/geographic assets, and community connections. The Opportunity Analysis sets the stage for recommendations to build off these assets to define an economic development vision and guide redevelopment in a region rocked by major plant closures. The focus of this effort puts emphasis on how catalytic elements/projects can act as stimulants to initiate expanded private development interest in the wider Jefferson County area while balancing that interest with important considerations such as public access to the urban river, infrastructural improvements and changes, high-quality job creation, and sustainability.

**Growth Potential** The city of Jefferson has the potential to expand its economic footprint and ability to accommodate 21st Century employers by addressing aging industrial and commercial stock and presenting companies with the potential locational and cost-saving advantages found in Jefferson. This is essential to recruiting and retaining businesses in a variety of sectors, including heavy and light manufacturing, warehousing and storage, and assembly manufacturing.

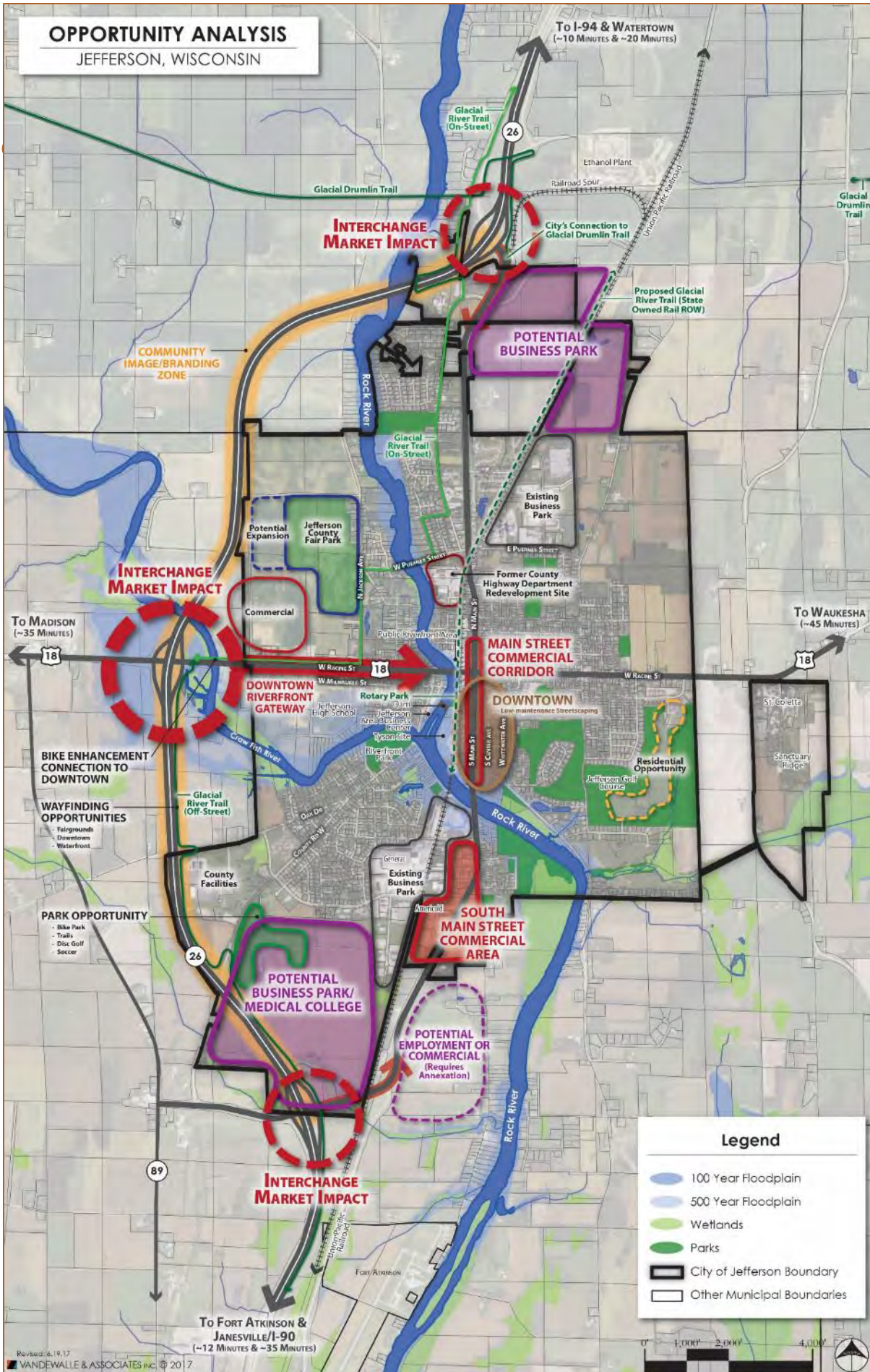
**Areas of Intersection** Key highway interchanges and corridors bring travelers to Jefferson every day. These areas present opportunities for commercial and retail development, enticing travelers to stop and visit local businesses, enhancing the quality of life for Jefferson residents, and providing new economic opportunities in the community.

**Connectors and Corridors** The large presence of recreational trails and natural amenities, along with its positional along regional thoroughfares presents opportunity for Jefferson to expand its branding and wayfinding to attract new visitors and ease the use of their most popular destinations. Wayfinding can connect trail users to local businesses in key commercial areas.

**Space for Infill** Several sites in Jefferson are currently underutilized and poised for infill development that will return them to productive uses while limiting the City's need to expand its limits through annexation.

# OPPORTUNITY ANALYSIS

## JEFFERSON, WISCONSIN



Legend	
	100 Year Floodplain
	500 Year Floodplain
	Wetlands
	Parks
	City of Jefferson Boundary
	Other Municipal Boundaries

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOVERY FRAMEWORK



### OPPORTUNITY AREAS AND INITIATIVES

The following six Opportunity Areas for economic growth have been identified based on the community's place-based economic, cultural and natural assets. Following the description of each Opportunity Area are high priority or near term economic development initiatives. Strategic in nature, these initiatives are a pipeline of effort for the community and partners over the next 5-10 years.



#### Capitalize on Jefferson's Crawfish River, Rock River, and Public Land Recreation Opportunities

##### Economic Development Initiatives:

- **Promote location along the Rock River Trail Initiative 320 mile:** hiking, biking, paddling, driving program. Promote Jefferson's role in water recreation opportunities with the Rock and Crawfish River corridors including the Rock River National Water Trail.
- **Capitalize on the regional bicycle connectors** with the north-south Glacial River Trail and east-west Glacial Drumlin Trail.
- **Leverage these assets by becoming a key destination for water sports** rentals/purchase, mooring, bike rentals/purchase, fishing, sports equipment and activity centers including marina, fishing supplies, restaurants, waterfront parks.

## OPPORTUNITY AREAS



### 2. HEALTHCARE



#### Target Healthcare Industry and Healthcare Higher Education Growth

##### Economic Development Initiatives:

- **Advance medical college campus** by advancing development of the medical college.
- **Target healthcare development including clinics and ancillary users** to provide nearby healthcare options for residents to strengthen small town appeal.
- **Promote medical college and healthcare connections** to surrounding neighborhoods for infill residential development.

## OPPORTUNITY AREAS



### 3. SMALL-TOWN LIVING



#### Enhance the Downtown and Riverfront to be a Destination for Residents and Visitors.

##### Economic Development Initiatives:

- **Move forward with the next phase of downtown and riverfront revitalization implementation** starting with redevelopment of the Tyson and the Former County Highway Department Sites with a mix of uses including residential, community facilities, and destination retail.
- **Focus revitalization efforts on historic preservation of key downtown properties** through property owner coordination and façade and interior improvement programs.
- **Strengthen retail, hospitality, and visitor destination options** within downtown and existing retail development areas.
- **Focus on downtown and riverfront area** historic neighborhoods improvements.
- **Advance projects for river connections, public access and interaction** and downtown connections to regional trail networks.
- **Promote small town amenities through community promotion, outreach and organizational development** including neighborhoods, schools, and community events.

- **Offer diversity in housing options** to appeal to varied demographics: including rehab of existing housing stock as well as new build. Seek to meet markets for families, young adults, and empty nesters.
- **Launch Jefferson's new community image and branding strategy** in coordination with community organizations including the Chamber.



### **Promote Development in Targeted Areas for Business**

#### **Economic Development Initiatives:**

- **Focus on the Highway 26 Interchange areas** for significant tax base growth. Develop Master Plans for each of the interchange areas to promote high quality development to present fresh community image at each of the entryways into Jefferson.
- **Advance development of business parks/development areas** within community focused on industries in which Jefferson has a competitive advantage such as manufacturing, food processing, energy and electrical technologies.
- **Focus on growth in home-grown small and medium size businesses** – a historic strength of the community – explore opportunities to start up an entrepreneurial small business acceleration center.
- **Explore and study the potential for local arts cluster advancement** building off the existing artist network and in coordination with long-term plans for artist promotion programs.
- **Advance development of a master plan for the County Fair Park** to develop a long-term strategy to capitalize on and diversify events and impact of visitors to the destination.
- **Connect under-skilled employee base** to existing training and education/technical skill development options in the region to strengthen workforce and provide options to employers seeking location in Jefferson.
- **Coordinate career pathways and workforce development strategies** within Jefferson middle and high schools.



## OPPORTUNITY AREAS



### 5. VALUE-ADD FOOD PRODUCTION



**Leverage Agricultural Strengths of Area to Advance Economic Growth in Local Foods and Food Production.**

#### Economic Development Initiatives:

- Explore opportunities to advance economic development in existing Jefferson County economic strengths in value-add food production related to dairy, nursery stock and sod, grain, vegetables, aquaculture, and nutraceuticals.
- Investigate opportunities to build upon existing local food businesses as well as grow the Jefferson Farmers Market potentially in coordination with the private sector or other area markets.

## OPPORTUNITY AREAS



### 6. GREEN ECONOMY



**Strategically Promote Green Economy Business Development Opportunities to Maximize Existing Assets.**

#### Economic Development Initiatives:

- Green economy industries can include manufacturing of: food production, bioplastics, green building/smart construction, materials recovery, advanced packaging, by-products development. Industries also include transportation, energy, water and air quality technologies.
- Study the future potential to increase energy production as an economic development opportunity utilizing waste-to-energy technologies and focus on providing reliable, redundant, and affordable renewable energy to businesses.
- Investigate opportunities to create a renewable business strategy to provide green power in a combined power district setting.

## DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND INITIATIVES

To advance economic development “in place” the Development Opportunities Map highlights:

1. Key sites with development potential consistent with local goals and objectives.
2. Areas to advance economic initiatives based on existing strengths, natural resources and proximity to regional connections to Milwaukee, Madison, and Chicago areas.
3. Targets for site reuse and potential business growth opportunities where Jefferson could focus its economic development efforts and include ideas for how to cultivate these businesses locally in addition to attracting

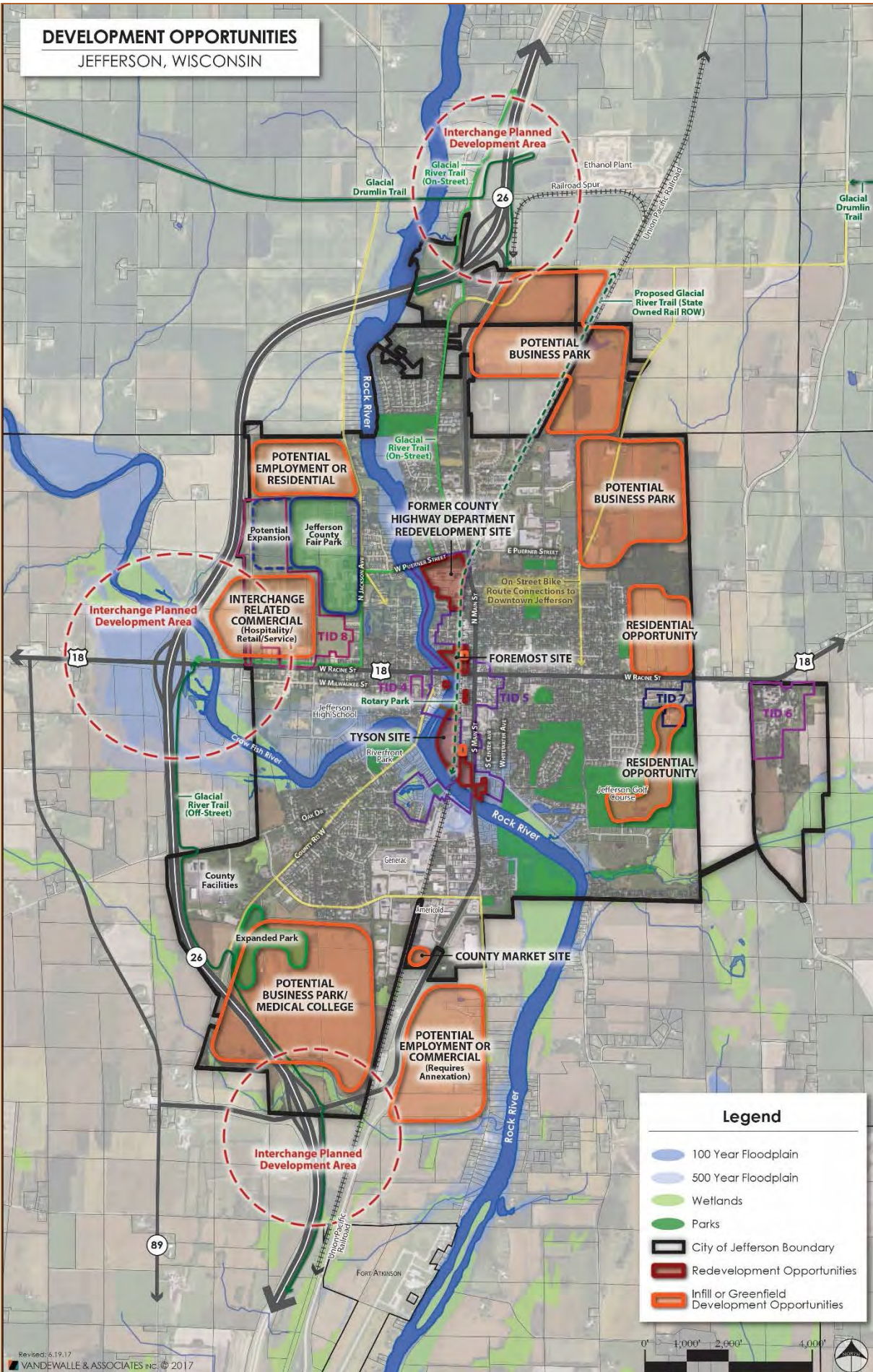
To forge a clear path for economic development around Jefferson’s key Opportunity Areas, initiatives targeted toward specific economic sectors for growth should be drilled-down to site specific opportunities. This section of the plan makes the connection between economic development Opportunity Areas and the geographic locations most-ready and market feasible to advance the identified Economic Development Initiatives.

### JEFFERSON DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Business Parks.** Opportunities to expand or build new business parks, employment districts mixed with commercial and nearby residential neighborhoods exist throughout Jefferson with each site easily connected to the transportation network as well as the cultural and natural resources of the City.
2. **Residential Improvements.** Strong communities have a healthy mix of residential options. In addition to reinvestment in commercial development, Jefferson should encourage development of new residential options that span the mix of: single family, multi-family, and mixed-use developments. Expansion of employment opportunities in the community will require expansion of housing as well. A variety of locations along Jefferson’s east and northwestern boundaries are appealing areas for new residential develop that provide residents access to the City’s natural, recreational, and economic opportunities. Development of the Medical College will also increase demand for housing for students as well as faculty.
3. **Interchange Planned Development Areas.** The junctions of high-traffic county and state highways present unique opportunities to develop new areas that can serve passing travelers and encourage them to stay in the community, providing an economic benefit to the City. Additionally, development of these interchange areas surrounding WI-26 and US-18 provides employment opportunities and expands the ease and convenience of commuting that is already an asset for the community. As the front door to the community in three key locations, the Interchange Development Areas offer an opportunity and challenge to create the front door character, the community wants to portray to the region for visitors, employers, employees and residents.
4. **Redevelopment of Underutilized Sites.** Redevelopment of former industrial sites are critical catalytic projects that reposition the sites in the community. The following sites are in prime locations to return to productive and beneficial uses that the community can be proud of. Key redevelopment sites include:
  - Tyson
  - Former County Highway Department
  - Foremost Buildings
  - Intersection of WI-26, US-18, and the Rock River

# DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

JEFFERSON, WISCONSIN



DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES MAP

## DOWNTOWN VISION

The City of Jefferson updated their Downtown & Riverfront Redevelopment Plan in 2015, just before Tyson announced their downtown plant closure. The 2015 Plan remains relevant; however, the following Downtown Vision map provides further, updated analysis and recommendations to advance downtown revitalization. As the heart of the community, with small-town living as a key focus area and strength- Jefferson's authentic downtown experience should be emphasized, continuously advanced and managed. The following recommendations are critical to achieving economic recovery success as the community's downtown and riverfront environment are so tightly tied to the community's identity.

### 1. Utilize Cultural Heritage to Enhance the Downtown Experience

- a. Solidify the Downtown Historic District through branding and targeted reinvestment.
- b. Expand arts culture with more galleries and shops.
- c. Recruit restaurants that can utilize Jefferson's local advantage as a food and agricultural hub, including a brew pub and farm-to-table restaurant

### 2. Riverfront Development and Public Access

- a. Pursue riverfront commercial and residential development that enhances use along the riverfront
- b. Maintain public access to the park, even in private development locations
- c. Advance projects for river connections, public access, and interaction with the larger downtown and regional networks
- d. Develop community uses that celebrate the riverfront and incorporate it into community events, including a beer hall/ event space

### 3. Downtown Housing

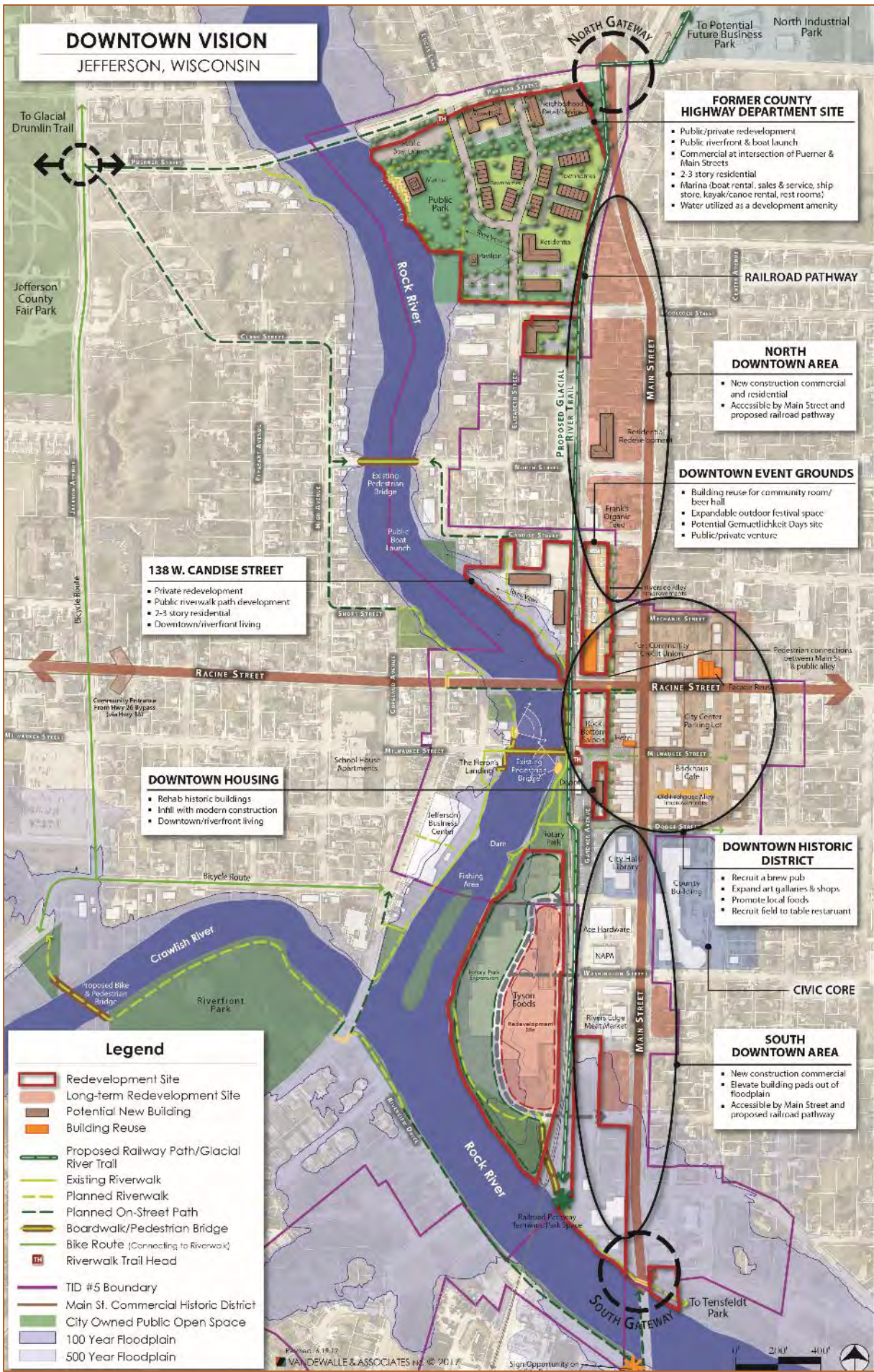
- a. Provide new opportunities for downtown urban housing that uses the river as a development asset
- b. Pursue opportunities to rehabilitate historic housing, preserving Jefferson's architectural character and heritage
- c. Capitalize on infill opportunities that address vacant or underutilized properties and provide historic and possibly underinvested areas with modern construction

### 4. Public Private Partnerships

- a. Leverage city and county owned properties to advance development from private sector
- b. Find public-private agreements that preserves public access to community locations, including the Riverwalk, parks and water access points

### 5. Expand Connections to Parks and Trails

- a. Leverage urban green assets, including the river, parks, and bike trails, to mark Jefferson as a key destination for water sports, active lifestyles, and outdoor recreation
- b. Develop commercial opportunities to support park and trail users, including boat rentals, mooring, bike rentals and repairs, fishing and sports equipment retail, as well as restaurants, cafes, and concession vendors



DOWNTOWN VISION MAP

## DEVELOPMENT SITES

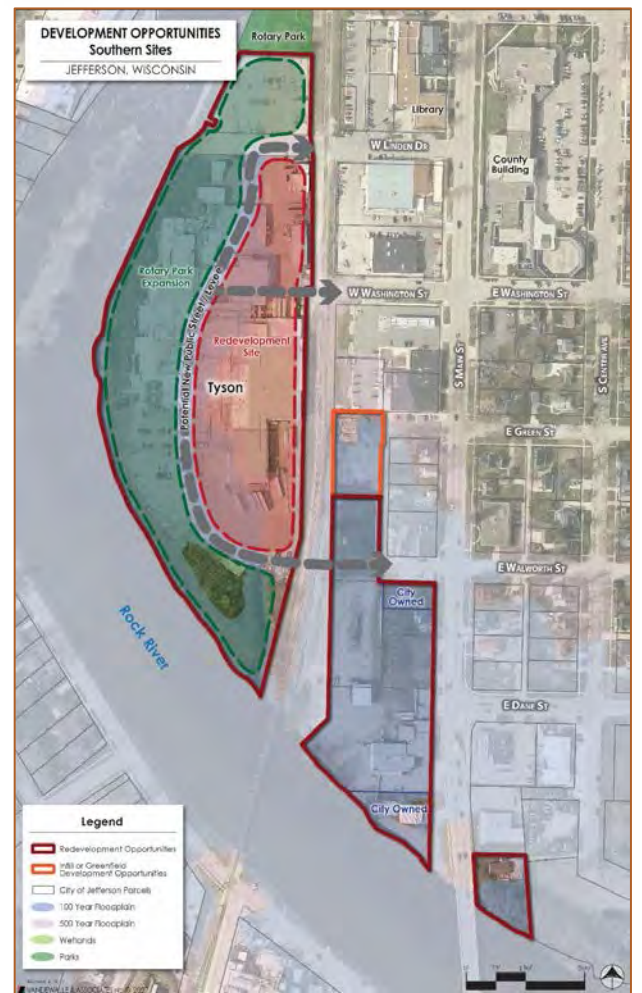
### SOUTHERN SITE: TYSON

- Advance Riverfront: in coordination with property owners, redevelop critical downtown and riverfront sites.
- Infrastructure Improvements: install roads to return the site to the street grid, improving mobility and access
- Expand Rotary Park: increase green space and recreational space along the riverfront
- Flood Mitigation: Capitalize on flood improvement opportunity by expanding park space on the river
- Connect: Integrate site with Downtown through Main Street and potential Railroad Pathway as well as the Glacial River Trail
- Public-Private Partnerships: leverage city owned properties to serve as catalytic projects



### Opportunity Areas

-  RECREATION AND NATURE-BASED ACTIVITIES
-  SMALL-TOWN LIVING
-  BUSINESS/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES: SOUTHERN SITE

## NORTHERN SITE: FORMER COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

- Advance the redevelopment plan for the area: focus on a waterfront park, infill housing, mixed use commercial frontage, and waterfront recreation amenities.
- Utilize Location: capitalize on this highly visibly and well-connected site location just north of downtown along Main St., Puerner St., with easy connections to the Fair Park and WI-26 interchange area. Site is also located on the Rock River and can use the river as a key development amenity
- Public-Private Redevelopment: County owned land can be used to encourage private development, while maintaining public access to amenities
- Residential Development: construct 2-3 story housing that provides urban living with access to natural assets
- Advance public Riverfront Park and Boat Launch: provide public park space, including a boat launch and marina through a public-private agreement
- Commercial Development at Corridor Intersection: create mixed-use on the site with neighborhood scale commercial properties at the intersection of Main St. and Puerner St.



### Opportunity Areas

- BUSINESS/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
- RECREATION AND NATURE-BASED ACTIVITIES
- SMALL-TOWN LIVING



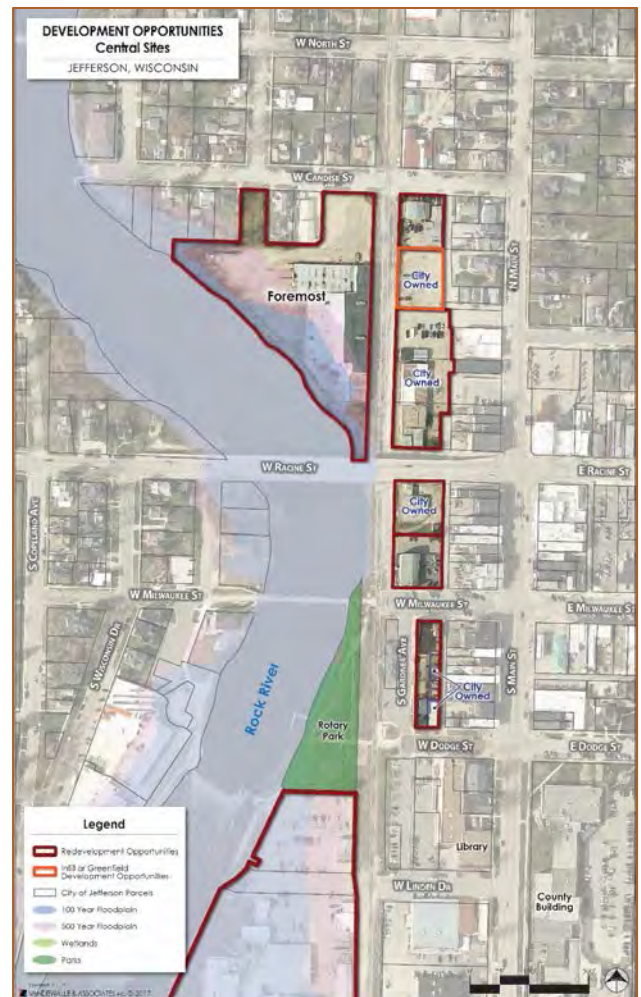
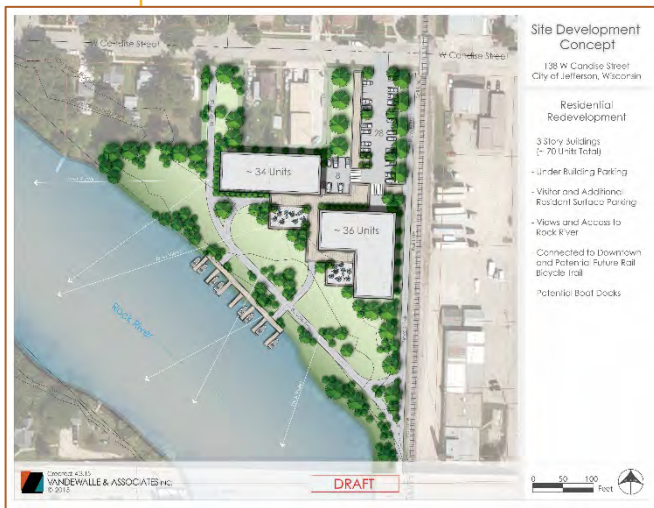
DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES:  
 NORTHERN SITE

### CENTRAL SITE: FOREMOST BUILDINGS

- Continue to advance community vision: reuse site for riverfront condominiums or apartments sited to maximized views of the Rock River based on existing plan
- Public Riverwalk: develop continuation of the Riverwalk path that is open and accessible to the public
- Event Grounds: leverage city owned land to enhance downtown experience with a Downtown Events Ground that includes versatile space for beer hall, community gatherings, festival space and potential Gemuetlichkeit Days site
- Redevelopment and Infill Opportunities: City owned properties to the east provide opportunities for both site redevelopment and infill investment

#### Opportunity Areas

-  SMALL-TOWN LIVING
-  BUSINESS/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
-  RECREATION AND NATURE-BASED ACTIVITIES



DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES: CENTRAL SITE



## PARKS AND TRAILS

- Build on Park System: expand numerous parks, including Rotary park to increase green space and address floodplain issues along riverfront sites
- Create Publicly Accessible Riverwalk: allow public access to river a true community asset, even in privately developed locations
- Connect Recreation and Commercial Opportunities: allow visitors to recreational facilities to access commercial opportunities including shops, hotels, restaurants and cafes
- Expand Bike Network: increase on- and off-street bike paths to provide active transportation and recreational alternatives for residents and visitors, including the Glacial River Trail and the proposed Railroad Pathway
- Create and Maintain Water Access Points: expand boat launch, mooring and marina facilities to allow users access to water recreation. Include supportive businesses including equipment sales, rental, and repair shops, to encourage users and make Jefferson's downtown riverfront a functional water sports destination.



### Opportunity Areas



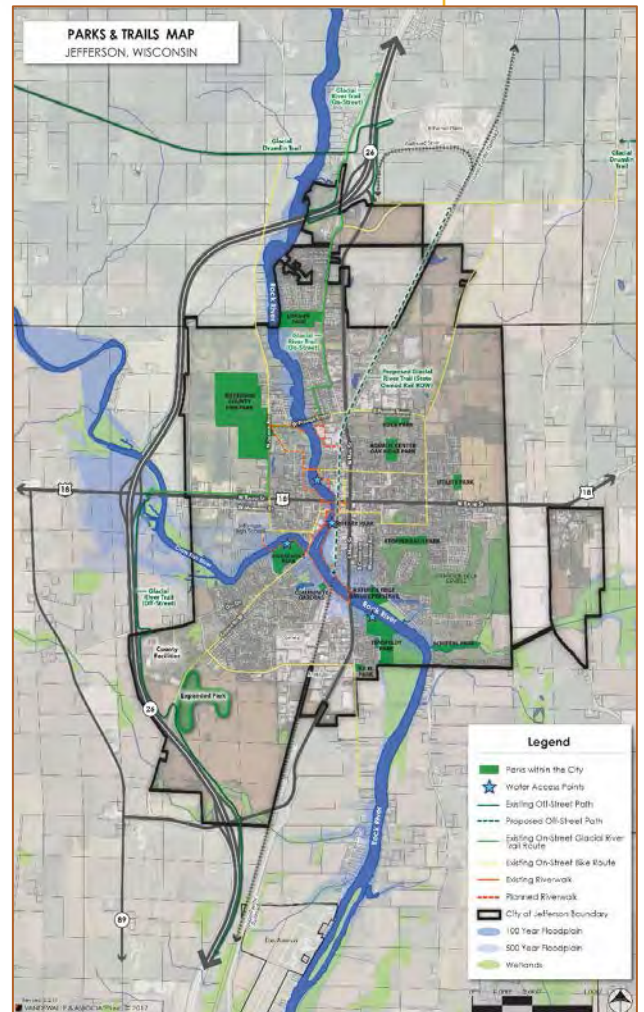
BUSINESS/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



RECREATION AND NATURE-BASED ACTIVITIES



SMALL-TOWN LIVING



PARKS AND TRAILS MAP

## JEFFERSON STRATEGIC ECONOMIC RECOVERY FRAMEWORK

The following fold-out Strategic Economic Recovery Framework ties the planning effort together and is a communication tool to advance project implementation, and lead to a more defined implementation strategy to outline actions, assign lead roles and responsibilities, and suggest partners for implementation.

# JEFFERSON STRATEGIC ECONOMIC RECOVERY FRAMEWORK



## KEY FOCUS AREAS

1. CAPITALIZE ON SMALL-TOWN COMMUNITY STRENGTHS AND MAGNETISM
2. PROMOTE HOME-GROWN BUSINESS GROWTH AS WELL AS LOCATION AS A DESTINATION FOR BUSINESSES TO LOCATE AND GROW
3. NURTURE AND GROW ASSETS IN NATURE-BASED RECREATION, FOOD PRODUCTION, AND ARTS



## OPPORTUNITY AREAS

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

## PROJECT OBJECTIVE

Position Jefferson for economic recovery and growth by identifying asset-based opportunity areas and aligning initiatives to sites with greatest potential for redevelopment and economic growth.

### 1. RECREATION AND NATURE-BASED ACTIVITIES



Capitalize on Jefferson's Crawfish River, Rock River, and public land recreation opportunities.



- Promote location along the Rock River Trail Initiative 320 mile: hiking, biking, paddling, driving program. Promote Jefferson's role in water recreation opportunities with the Rock and Crawfish River corridors including the Rock River National Water Trail.
- Capitalize on the regional bicycle connectors with the north-south Glacial River Trail and east-west Glacial Drumlin Trail.
- Leverage these assets by becoming a key destination for water sports rentals/purchase, mooring, bike rentals/purchase, fishing, sports equipment and activity centers including marina, fishing supplies, restaurants, waterfront parks.

### 2. HEALTHCARE



Target healthcare industry and healthcare higher education growth.



- Advance medical college campus to by advancing development of the medical college.
- Target healthcare development including clinics and ancillary users to provide nearby healthcare options for residents to strengthen small town appeal.
- Promote medical college and healthcare connections to surrounding neighborhoods for infill residential development.

### 3. SMALL-TOWN LIVING



Enhance the downtown and riverfront to be a destination for residents and visitors.



- Move forward with the next phase of downtown and riverfront revitalization implementation starting with redevelopment of the Tyson and the Former County Highway Department Sites with a mix of uses including residential, community facilities, and destination retail.
- Focus revitalization efforts on historic preservation of key downtown properties through property owner coordination and façade and interior improvement programs.
- Strengthen retail, hospitality, and visitor destination options within downtown and existing retail development areas.
- Focus on downtown and riverfront area historic neighborhoods improvements.
- Advance projects for river connections, public access and interaction and downtown connections to regional trail networks.
- Promote small town amenities through community promotion, outreach and organizational development including neighborhoods, schools, and community events.
- Offer diversity in housing options to appeal to varied demographics: including rehab of existing housing stock as well as new build. Seek to meet markets for families, young adults, and empty nesters.
- Launch Jefferson's new community image and branding strategy in coordination with community organizations including the Chamber.

### 4. BUSINESS/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



Promote development in targeted areas for business growth in the community based on existing assets.



- Focus on the Highway 26 Interchange areas for significant tax base growth. Develop Master Plans for each of the interchange areas to promote high quality development to present fresh community image at each of the entryways into Jefferson.
- Advance development of business parks/development areas within community focused on industries in which Jefferson has a competitive advantage such as manufacturing, food processing, energy and electrical technologies.
- Focus on growth in home-grown small and medium size businesses – a historic strength of the community – explore opportunities to start up an entrepreneurial small business acceleration center.
- Explore and study the potential for local arts cluster advancement building off the existing artist network and in coordination with long-term plans for artist promotion programs.
- Advance development of a master plan for the County Fair Park to develop a long-term strategy to capitalize on and diversify events and impact of visitors to the destination.
- Connect under-skilled employee base to existing training and education/technical skill development options in the region to strengthen workforce and provide options to employers seeking location in Jefferson.
- Coordinate career pathways and workforce development strategies within Jefferson middle and high schools.

### 5. VALUE-ADD FOOD PRODUCTION



Leverage agricultural strengths of area to advance economic growth in local foods and food production.



- Explore opportunities to advance economic development in existing Jefferson County economic strengths in value-add food production related to dairy, nursery stock and sod, grain, vegetables, aquaculture, and nutraceuticals.
- Investigate opportunities to build upon existing local food businesses as well as grow the Jefferson Farmers Market potentially in coordination with the private sector or other area markets.

### 6. GREEN ECONOMY



Strategically promote green economy business development opportunities to maximize existing assets.



- Green economy industries can include manufacturing of: food production, bioplastics, green building/smart construction, materials recovery, advanced packaging, by-products development. Industries also include transportation, energy, water and air quality technologies.
- Study the future potential to increase energy production as an economic development opportunity utilizing waste-to-energy technologies and focus on providing reliable, redundant, and affordable renewable energy to businesses.
- Investigate opportunities to create a renewable business strategy to provide green power in a combined power district setting.



## PROJECTS TO ADVANCE IN NEAR TERM

Several of the projects listed in the Framework are either already underway or are slated to begin implementation in the coming year. Other high priority projects are recommended as near term projects to move ahead –projects that have a high potential return on investment, or are catalytic in that they will advance momentum in a particular Opportunity Area. Priority near-term projects are focused on advancing the identified Economic Recovery Focus Areas:

1. **CAPITALIZE ON SMALL-TOWN COMMUNITY STRENGTHS AND MAGNETISM**
2. **PROMOTE HOME-GROWN BUSINESS GROWTH AS WELL AS LOCATION AS A DESTINATION FOR BUSINESSES TO LOCATE AND GROW**
3. **NURTURE AND GROW ASSETS IN NATURE-BASED RECREATION, FOOD PRODUCTION, AND ARTS**

A quick summary of these first projects is provided below.

1. Implementation Committee: Create Implementation Committee similar to the Economic Recovery Plan Project Committee.
  - Helps spearhead and advance key catalytic projects at the staff and elected leadership levels.
  - Reports to the RDA and City Council.
2. Move forward with the next phase of downtown and riverfront revitalization implementation and advance projects for river connections, public access and interaction and downtown connections to regional trail networks.
  - Start with redevelopment of the Tyson and the Former County Highway Department Sites with a mix of uses including residential, community facilities, and destination retail.
  - Develop recreational retail: bike store, kayak, outfitter
  - Advance recreational branding and clear connections/signage for wayfinding to existing local and regional routes/connections. Develop downtown connections to regional trails
  - Focus revitalization efforts on targeted historic preservation of key downtown properties through property owner coordination and façade and interior improvement programs.
3. Advance medical college and ancillary medical, research and development growth at highly-visible location promoting an option for business development growth unique to Jefferson and surrounding communities.
  - Advance development strategy to move forward with medical college.
  - Recruit medical clinic and ancillary businesses and community facilities.
4. Focus on Highway 26 Interchange areas for significant tax base growth.
  - Develop master plans for each of the interchange areas to promote high quality development, present fresh community image at each entryway to the community.